

An open letter to Sound and Music and Arts Council England

27 March 2012

In its business plan of 2008, formulated after several years of detailed planning and approved by the Arts Council, the newly created body Sound and Music made it clear that it would both embrace and enhance the functions of the organisations which had been merged in order to form it: the Society for the Promotion of New Music, the British Music Information Centre, Sonic Arts Network, and the Contemporary Music Network. Instead, within a remarkably short time, it abandoned virtually all of the long-established and constructive activities of its constituent parts, largely in favour of a bland and unfocused endorsement of 'sound art' and the promotion of relatively fringe activities which had little or no connection with the mainstream. These are far from being areas undeserving of support, but Sound and Music had absolutely no remit to change direction in this way.

Rather than act on behalf of composers and the many musicians who work in the field of new music, it sought to become a 'producer' and to lead instead of serve its community. Having dismantled the previous organisations and disenfranchised their extensive membership, Sound and Music went on to alienate virtually the entire contemporary music sector: a recent wide-ranging survey conducted for the Holst Foundation (*Provision for New Music*, bit.ly/jOv7MW) could find no one with a good word to say on its behalf. What is particularly disturbing is the disappearance of the support for young and unestablished composers (and the musicians working with them) which the founder organisations had successfully provided over many years. Equally distressing is the abandonment of any form of Music Information Centre in England, resulting in a significant loss of international status for British music.

In spite of recent severe cuts to its public funding and the resignation of members of both the executive and board last year, Sound and Music's current 'New Direction' document shows absolutely no sign of recognition of or apology for the extent of its failure to live up to its original plans; no indication that it has consulted at all with the new music community it presumes to represent; no reduction in its bloated corporate agenda; nor any desire to take risks. Instead it has, in self-regarding fashion, promised more of the same; and has pledged to continue promoting 'Electronic and Improvised; Noise and Art Rock; Notated and Modern Composition; Sonic Art; Multimedia and Cross Art Form; Jazz, World and Folk; and Alternative Rock & Dance': areas of music which have many virtues but are for the most part entirely different from those for which Sound and Music was created.

The undersigned, the majority of whom are actively engaged with 'Notated and Modern Composition', deplore the current state of affairs, and call for the reinstatement of the core functions of the founder organisations without delay. The recommendations of the Holst Foundation report offer many practical suggestions for the appropriate support of new music in the years ahead.

Signed:

Nicola LeFanu, Colin Matthews and over 250 signatories,

headed by Sir Harrison Birtwistle and Sir Peter Maxwell Davies and including Julian Anderson, George Benjamin, Sir Richard Rodney Bennett, Martyn Brabbins, Michael Finnissy, Anthony Gilbert, Steven Isserlis, Oliver Knussen, Paul Mealar, Thea Musgrave, and Judith Weir.

A full list of signatories is attached.

Name		Affiliation
Eleanor	Alberga	composer; joint director, Arcadia Music Festival
Julian	Anderson	composer
Dr Tom	Armstrong	lecturer in music, School of Arts, University of Surrey
Christopher	Austin	
Peter	Awiss	composer, conductor, teacher, performer
Joanna	Baillie	composer, co-director Ensemble Plus-Minus
Richard	Baker	composer, conductor, former SPNM Trustee
Stephen Mark	Barchan	composer, conductor, music copyist
Paul	Barker	composer; professor of music theatre, University of London
Matthew	Barley	cellist, arranger, producer, educator
Stephen	Barlow	artistic director Buxton Festival, conductor, composer
Alison	Bauld	composer
Sally	Beamish	composer
Samuel	Becker	composer, conductor, educator
Luke	Bedford	composer
Mary	Bellamy	composer, senior lecturer, Huddersfield University
George	Benjamin, CBE	composer, conductor
Ed	Bennett	composer
Sir Richard Rodney	Bennett, CBE	composer
Michael	Berkeley	composer, broadcaster
Richard	Bernas	conductor; music consultant, Tate Modern
Dr Mark	Berry	lecturer in music, Royal Holloway, University of London
Judith	Bingham	composer
Peter	Birkby	composer, BASCA member
Sir Harrison	Birtwistle, CH	composer
David	Blake	composer
Rory	Boyle	composer
Martyn	Brabbins	chief conductor, Nagoya Philharmonic Orchestra; chief guest conductor Royal Flemish Philharmonic; director Orkney Conductors' Course
Charlotte	Bray	composer
Julian	Broughton	composer, pianist, convenor music & creative studies programmes, Centre for Community Engagement, University of Sussex
David	Bruce	composer, founder of CompositionToday.com
Alan	Bullard	composer; member BASCA board and ISM PCS committee; former member of spnm and BMIC
Andrew	Burn	
Diana	Burrell	composer, artistic director, Harwich Festival of the Arts
Mervyn	Burtch	composer, teacher
Tony	Burton	writer on music; former member SPNM Council
Sulyen	Caradon	composer, conductor, musicologist, founder of Severnside Composer's Alliance
David	Carhart	composer, performer

Gary	Carpenter	composer; visiting professor of composition, Royal Northern College of Music; professor of composition, Royal Academy of Music
Philip	Cashian	head of composition, Royal Academy of Music
John	Casken	composer; emeritus professor of music, University of Manchester
Richard	Causton	composer
Sam	Cave	classical guitarist, composer
Sally	Cavender	vice-chairman and performance music director, Faber Music Ltd
Prof Michael	Clarke	composer
Symon	Clarke	composer
Andrew	Clements	music critic, The Guardian
Nicholas	Cleobury	conductor
Stephen	Cleobury, CBE	director of music, King's College, Cambridge
Hugh	Cobbe, OBE	chairman, The RVW Trust
Michael	Coe	composer, conductor
David	Cohen	Hon FGS
Jonathan	Cole	composer
Bill	Connor	composer
Peter	Copley	composer, performer, university lecturer
Peter	Craik	former administrator SPNM
Dr John	Croft	senior lecturer in music, Brunel University London
Gordon	Crosse	composer
Joe	Cutler	composer; head of composition, Birmingham Conservatoire
Sir Peter Maxwell	Davies	composer; former president of SPNM; Master of the Queen's Music
Tansy	Davies	composer
Julian	Dawes	composer
Odaline	de la Martinez	composer, conductor
Peter	Dickinson	composer, writer, pianist
James	Dillon	composer
Marc	Dooley	head of new music, Peters Edition Ltd
Jonathan	Dove	composer
Andrew	Downes	composer; president, Central Composers' Alliance; former head, School of Composition and Creative Studies, Birmingham Conservatoire
Paul	Driver	music critic, The Sunday Times
Duncan	Druce	composer, violinist, violist
Mary	Dullea	pianist, Fidelio Trio
Deborah	Edwards	composer
Brian	Elias	composer
Helen	Faulkner	former advisor to and trustee of BMIC
Prof Michael	Finnissy	chair of composition, University of Southampton
Adrian Vernon	Fish	Winston Churchill Fellow, composer, broadcaster, cultural ambassador for Greenland
Graham	Fitkin	composer

Ben	Foskett	composer
Jenny	Fowler	composer
Erika	Fox	composer
Cheryl	Frances-Hoad	composer
Lionel	Friend	conductor
Tim	Gibson	new music copyist, editor
Anthony	Gilbert	composer; former member SPM Executive; former member, Contemporary Music Network Planning Committee
John	Gilhooly	director, Wigmore Hall
Dr Martin Kier	Glover	senior lecturer in composition, London College of Music, University of West London
Jonathan	Goldstein	composer; chair PCAM; BASCA member.
Adam	Gorb	composer; head of composition, Royal Northern College of Music
Michael Zev	Gordon	professor of composition, University of Birmingham
Dan	Goren	composer, performer, director of Source Music Services
Prof Stephen	Goss	composer; head of composition, University of Surrey
Larry	Goves	composer; tutor in composition, Royal Northern College of Music; composer in residence, Royal Holloway, University of London; tutor in composition, National Youth Orchestral of Great Britain
Pip	Greasley	Member of BASCA
Paul	Griffiths	former critic
Helen	Grime	composer, lecturer in composition, Royal Holloway, University of London
Graham	Hair	composer; professor emeritus in music, Glasgow University; visiting professor in contemporary arts, Manchester Metropolitan University
Geoff	Hannan	composer
Patrick	Harrex	composer, member of BASCA
Jonty	Harrison	composer; professor of composition and electroacoustic music, University of Birmingham
Sadie	Harrison	composer
Bryn	Harrison	composer
Dr Martyn	Harry	university lecturer, Faculty of Music, Oxford University; tutorial fellow in music, St Anne's College, Oxford; lecturer in music, St Hilda's College, Oxford
Sam	Hayden	composer, reader in composition, Durham University
Malcolm	Hayes	composer, music biographer, author, writer
Morgan	Hayes	composer, pianist
Graham	Hayter	director, Contemporary Music Promotions
John	Hearne	composer, conductor, music publisher/Longship Music, copyist, translator
Ken	Hesketh	composer; lecturer in composition, Royal College of Music; hon professor, University of Liverpool
Richard	Hill	composer, conductor
Alex	Hills	composer; lecturer, Royal Academy of Music
Linda	Hirst	mezzo soprano; head of vocal studies, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance
Prof Nicolas	Hodges	pianist, teacher
John	Holland	composer, conductor
Robin	Holloway	composer
Aaron	Holloway-Nahum	composer, conductor

Simon	Holt	composer
Dr Michael	Hooper	
John	Hopkins	composer, lecturer, Faculty of Music, Cambridge University
William	Howard	pianist
Vic	Hoyland	composer; professor of composition, University of Birmingham
Dr Edward	Hughes	composer; director New Music Players; senior lecturer in music, University of Sussex
Tom	Ingoldsby	composer
Steven	Isserlis, CBE	cellist, writer
Bill	Ives	composer, singer, teacher, conductor
Edmund	Jolliffe	composer
Julian	Joseph	pianist, composer, broadcaster
Matthew	Kaner	composer
Alison	Kay	composer; professor of composition, Royal College of Music
Robert	Keeley	senior lecturer in composition, King's College, London
Dorothy	Ker	composer
Matthew	King	composer, pianist
Steven	Kings	composer
Oliver	Knussen, CBE	composer, conductor, artist-in-association BBCSO and BCMG
Joyce Beetuan	Koh	composer
Edward	Lambert	composer, conductor
Dr Jolyon	Laycock	chairman, Severnside Composers Alliance
Adrian	Lee	composer, music director, music facilitator, publisher
Nicola	LeFanu	composer, former SPNM Council and Executive Committee member
Prof Erik	Levi	professor of music, Royal Holloway, University of London
David	Lumsdaine	composer; EC member SPNM 1965 - 1974; Co-founder (with Don Banks and Anthony Gilbert) SPNM Composer Seminars; Co-director 1967-1974
David	Lyon	composer, BASCA member
James	MacMillan, CBE	composer
Stuart	MacRae	composer
Kevin	Malone	
Dr Terry	Mann	George Butterworth Award for Composition, 2000
Jane	Manning, OBE	former vice-president SPNM
Roger	Marsh	composer
Christian	Mason	composer, co-artistic director Octandre Ensemble
David	Matthews	composer
Colin	Matthews, OBE	composer; former executive member and deputy chair SPNM; music director Britten-Pears Foundation
Dr Christopher	Mayo	composer
Gerard	McBurney	composer; artistic programming advisor, Chicago Symphony Orchestra; creative director, 'Beyond the Score'®
John	McCabe, CBE	composer; pianist; former president, Incorporated Society of Musicians; former director, London College of Music
Cecilia	McDowall	
Edward	McGuire	composer; chair, Scotland and Northern Ireland Region Musicians' Union

John	McLeod	composer; former director PRS for Music; BASCA; former council member SPM
Stephen	McNeff	composer; former composer in residence, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra; trustee, PRS for Music Foundation
Ian	McQueen	BASCA executive member
Prof Paul	Mealor	composer
Prof Silvina	Milstein	composer; professor of music, King's College London
Ian	Mitchell	clarinettist; director of Gemini; head of wind, brass & percussion, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music & Dance
William	Mival	head of composition, Royal College of Music, London
Adrian	Moore	composer
Lloyd	Moore	composer
Darragh	Morgan	violinist, Fidelio Trio
Annette	Morreau	founder/director Contemporary Music Network (1971-1987)
Dominic	Muldowney	composer
Thea	Musgrave, CBE	composer
Thalia	Myers	pianist, teacher
Ed	Nesbit	composer
Paul	Newland	composer
Rodney S.	Newton	composer, arranger, conductor, adjudicator, educator, music consultant
George	Nicholson	reader in composition, Sheffield University; former member, SPM Executive Committee
Bayan	Northcott	composer, writer, Holst Foundation trustee
Brian	Noyes	composer
Dr Patrick	Nunn	composer, educator, lecturer in composition Royal Academy of Music.
Tarik	O'Regan	composer
Tony	Osborne	composer; lecturer in composition, University of Reading Institute of Education; member of BASCA
Lady Camilla	Panufnik	founder, LSO-Panufnik Project for Young Composers.
Roxanna	Panufnik	composer
Dr Hilda	Paredes	composer
Tim	Parkinson	composer, performer, curator
Anthony	Payne	former chair, SPM
Joseph	Phibbs	composer
Stephen	Plaistow	former editor/new music, BBC Radio 3
Geoff	Poole	composer; emeritus professor of composition, University of Bristol.
Francis	Pott	professor of composition, London College of Music, University of West London
Andrew	Powell	chairman, Cyfansoddwyr Cymru/Composers of Wales; BASCA member
Jonathan	Powell	pianist, composer, writer
Steph	Power	composer
Dave	Price	composer, performer
Dr Timothy	Raymond	composer, former head of composition and contemporary music, Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama
Martin	Read	composer; head of music, Alton College
Camden	Reeves	composer
Peter	Reynolds	composer
Dr Judith	Ring	composer

Ian	Ritchie	director, City of London Festival
Jeremy Dale	Roberts	composer; former head of composition, Royal College of Music
Sarah	Rodgers	chairman, BASCA [British Academy of Songwriters, Composer and Authors]
Dr Kate	Romano	director of doctoral programmes & deputy head of academic studies, Guildhall School of Music & Drama; performer
Colin	Rose	artist
Gregory	Rose	conductor, composer
Sir Norman	Rosenthal	Royal Academy Exhibitions Secretary, 1977-2008
Edwin	Roxburgh	composer, conductor, former member SPNM Artistic Committee
Clark	Rundell	director, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic ensemble 10/10
John	Rutter	composer, conductor
Timothy	Salter	composer, conductor, pianist
Rhian	Samuel	composer; professor emeritus, City University, London
David	Sawer	composer
Prof Robert	Saxton	fellow and tutor in music, Worcester College, Oxford
Andy	Scott	member, Apollo Saxophone Quartet; composer; tutor of saxophone, Royal Northern College of Music
Dr Mike	Searby	principal lecturer, Kingston University
Elizabeth	Sharma	composer, member of BASCA
Dr Arlene	Sierra	senior lecturer in composition, Cardiff University School of Music
Paul	Silverthorne	principal viola, London Symphony Orchestra & London Sinfonietta; Professor of viola, Royal Academy of Music, London
Thomas	Simaku	composer; senior lecturer, York University
Cameron	Sinclair	composer, performer
Peter Sheppard	Skaervard	violinist; leader, Kreutzer Quartet; Viotti lecturer, Royal Academy of Music
Howard	Skempton	composer
Ed	Smith	international orchestra consultant
Dr Jeroen	Speak	composer, academic
Simon	Speare	composer, teacher
Dr Joseph	Spooner	
Richard	Steele	former director of artistic policy, Royal College of Music and executive director, SPNM
Richard	Steinitz, OBE	emeritus professor, founder and former artistic director, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival
David	Stoll	composer; board director, BASCA; chairman, Classical and Jazz Executive Committee; board director, European Composers' Forum; former trustee, British Music Information Centre
Prof Peter J.	Stollery	former chair, Sonic Arts Network
Martin	Suckling	composer; lecturer in music (composition), University of York.
Giles	Swayne	composer-in-residence, Clare College, Cambridge
Alan	Thomas	classical guitarist, composer
Dr Markus	Trunk	composer
Julia	Usher	composer, Colchester New Music
Paul	Usher	composer
Philip	Venables	composer; promoter, Fourfortytwo agency; former SPNM member
Ian	Vine	composer
Benjamin	Wallfisch	composer, conductor

David	Ward	composer
Duncan	Ward	composer, conductor, founding trustee WAM Foundation
Huw	Watkins	composer, pianist.
Liz	Webb	Liz Webb Management; former administrator SPNM; editor new:notes 1992-96
Judith	Weir, CBE	composer, former SPNM Trustee
John	White	head of music, Drama Centre London, School of Performance Studies, Central Saint Martins, composer and pianist
Arnold	Whittall	professor emeritus, Kings College London; chair, Holst Foundation
Ryan	Wigglesworth	composer, conductor
Tim	Williams	artistic director, Psappha
Trevor	Wishart	composer
Gareth	Wood	composer
James	Wood	composer, conductor, former programme director SPNM
John	Woolf, MBE	director, Park Lane Group; former administrator, SPNM
Guy	Woolfenden, OBE	composer; conductor; former head of music, Royal Shakespeare Company
John	Woolrich	composer
Barry	Wordsworth	music director, The Royal Ballet
David	Wordsworth	head of promotion/senior manager Oxford University Press (2003-8); composer manager, conductor
Raymond	Yiu	composer
Classical & Jazz Executive Committee		British Academy of Composers, Songwriters and Authors (BASCA)
		TOTAL 255 SIGNATORIES